

IOWA OUTDOORS

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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TROUT FISHING DURING HOT WEATHER

By Joe Wilkinson
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Cold water? Hot sun? On a late summer day, take the cold water. And if you're in northeast Iowa, it likely will hold trout.

Fishing may slow down in lots of places, but the hatchery trucks are still rolling. You can fish in a crowd or opt for no human voices, depending on where—and when—you go. Never having been to Big Mill, in Jackson County, I wandered through a couple weeks ago.

Doug Clark Senior pulled up a nice rainbow trout, from his perch over a bend in the stream, shortly after I walked up on him. “I fish this stream a lot, yeah. I try to get out (trout fishing) about once a week,” said Clark. I had run into him and his son a year or two ago on the Mississippi River lock and dam at Bellevue; a favorite walleye and sauger haunt. Here, three inches of rain two days before had the water running pretty cloudy, but he still had a couple rainbow trout to show for his time. “I catch one or two brook trout each time out (too). They're maybe a third of the catch.”

Rainbows still make up the great majority of catchable-sized trout stocked, about 80 percent. A few brookies are in most loads that go out, from the hatcheries at Manchester, Decorah and Elkader. Fingerling brown trout are stocked, separately, but the half-pound or so catchable browns have been phased out. Brown trout are doing well through natural reproduction or fingerling stocking on more than 100 miles of trout water, however.

Poking back through Big Mill, I could see a solitary angler here and there. Back at the big hole, though, eight people gathered round, laughing and joking. “I’m semi-retired and fishing gives me something to do,” admitted Clement Victor. “I enjoy the people and the fishing.” He was walking out with three this morning. “Two rainbows and a brook trout. I’d say the brook trout probably has a little more fight in it, compared to the rainbows,” assessed Victor.

Brightly colored Powerbait; paste or pellets were the bait of choice among Big Mill anglers...and for those along Fountain Spring, a few days later as I rode along with Tom Rohde, from the Manchester hatchery. Heavy rain a couple days before still had the streams running ‘brown’ with silt. The bright colors probably showed up better for the trout. By the end of the day, though, on Fountain Spring and nearby Twin Bridges county parks, it was clearing.

As Rohde rolled through the park, it seemed like his trout-filled truck was off the radar screen. Actually, it *was* here. Normally one of the busiest streams, Fountain Spring was an ‘unannounced stop’ that morning. “The advantage is that you can come here and have the place virtually to yourself,” pointed out Rohde. “I stocked 200 fish here today and there were only two people fishing. If you want to go further north, there will be even fewer people.”

Hatchery workers keep a tally of anglers present, as they stock trout. Knowing more will come and go through the week, it is not a scientific poll. However, the headcounts indicate that about twice as many trout-per-angler are stocked in the northern trout streams. “With gas prices the way they are, people maybe don’t want to travel as far”, guessed Rohde. “If you go up north, though, you’ll have better fishing and less fishing pressure.”

Still, there are some secluded spots. Even though Twin Bridges sits along Highway 3 and was on the schedule, only a half dozen people greeted us. “My girlfriend and I spend a day a week together and we go fishing,” laughed Deanna Soukup of Central. Still, her fishing buddy Bonnie, was a couple hundred yards upstream. “There aren’t a lot of people. It’s peaceful. I like fishing when it’s quiet,” Soukup offered.

Something for almost everybody, on Iowa’s trout streams. Sometimes, though, you create your own seclusion by driving away from every one else.

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FISHING, WATER ISSUES FEATURED DURING HOOVERFEST IN WEST BRANCH

“Fishing for fun...and to wash the soul.” Words penned decades ago by former President—and lifelong angler--Herbert Hoover have come to life this summer, through a

fly-fishing exhibit underway at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in West Branch. In early August, the focus steps outside as the site's Village Green hosts displays devoted to fishing and water issues.

The 'fishing for fun' day is Aug. 4, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site on Parkside Drive in West Branch. Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologists will staff a traveling aquarium stocked with Iowa fish. In addition, demonstrations will range from water quality monitoring in lakes and streams, hands-on fishing activities for children, target spin-casting, and how to tie flies similar to those used by Herbert Hoover. The Village Green displays will be part of the overall Hooverfest celebration in West Branch, noting the life and accomplishments of the only Iowa-born U. S. President.

Meanwhile, the fly-fishing exhibit continues at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. In addition to panels featuring photos, illustrations and captions showing the emergence of fly fishing (written reference to the sport is found as far back as 200 A.D.), there is rare footage Hoover casting into trout streams of the Northwest as far back as 1925. Also on display is some of Hoover's fishing gear, including a 1929 \$2.50 Pennsylvania fishing license listing his occupation (President) and residence (White House, Washington).

As part of the continuing exhibit, archeologist Doug Jones offers a presentation at 1:30 p.m. July 28, at the Visitor Center on the history of fishing in Iowa. Jones, from the State Historical Preservation Office, will include findings of native fishing weirs on Iowa streams.

###

FISHING REGULATIONS SUSPENDED AT BAYS BRANCH MARSH

PANORA – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources has removed all fishing regulations at Bays Branch to allow anglers to harvest fish using nearly means, except explosives, electricity or any stupefying substances.

The DNR has begun to lower the water level at Bays Branch to promote development of emergent vegetation, which is important as food and habitat to waterfowl, songbirds and other marsh mammals. The lower water level will expose shallow areas and encourage the growth of wetland plants. Lower water levels will help to control an over abundant carp population that has eliminated submerged aquatic plants and impacted water quality.

This proven management technique will improve the overall water quality and productivity of the marsh. Eliminating carp will allow colonization of emergent and

submergent aquatic plants that are important to migrating waterfowl and for removing nutrients from the water.

During the water draw down, the DNR will maintain and repair the water control structure. The DNR will maintain low water level through the spring of 2008 to allow the Guthrie County Road Department to complete a bridge replacement project.

Bays Branch is two miles northeast of Panora.

###

GRANTS AVAILABLE TO RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

AMES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has grant money available for Iowa's rural fire departments to help with equipment in battling wildfires. The grants offer funding assistance for wildfire suppression equipment, personal protective equipment, and communications equipment.

Gail Kantak, fire supervisor with the DNR's forestry bureau, said fire departments will receive direct mailings containing information about the grants soon. Kantak said departments should send her a Wildland Fire Report whenever they respond to a wildland fire or provide assistance to a prescribed or controlled wildland fire. Reporting forms are available at www.iowadnr.gov/forestry/fire.html. Departments actively returning these reports can receive priority points for the Volunteer Fire Assistance grant application.

"It is important for rural fire departments to return these reports so we can assess the actual demands on our rural fire departments as a result of wildfire," she said. The wildland fire reports will be compiled locally and nationally and will be reported to Congress.

The grants package being mailed to each Iowa Rural Fire Department and currently available at www.iowadnr.com/forestry/fire.html will include:

Volunteer Fire Assistance Application: 50-50 cost share grants for wildfire equipment with a maximum grant of \$3,500 per department. **Applications are due October 15, 2007.**

Iowa Wildland Fire Report Form: This form can be copied, completed and faxed in as wildland fires are responded to and as prescribed/controlled fires are assisted with.

Iowa DNR Forestry Bureau Fire Program Opportunities: outlines the programming opportunities available to Iowa's fire suppression agencies by the Iowa DNR Forestry Bureau in cooperation with federal, state and local partners.

“**Dry Hydrant Grants** are also currently available. If a community or a region within a fire departments response area is in need of more available water sources, please consider dry hydrants as an option. They do not have to be a standard pond or water-body access.” Kantak encouraged.

For more information, contact Kantak at 515-233-1161.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of July 24, 2007

www.iowadnr.gov

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

SOUTHWEST

Farm Ponds: Bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish are biting well.

Icaria (Adams): Some channel catfish are being caught.

Little River (Decatur): Channel catfish are biting from the bays on stink baits.

Bluegills and crappies are being caught from the deeper flooded timber at the lower end of the lake.

Wilson (Taylor): Channel catfish are biting on stink bait or liver.

Windmill (Taylor): Channel catfish have been caught on liver.

Green Valley (Union): Fishing is good for channel catfish on night crawlers and liver in the shallow bays. Some bluegill can be caught from the cedar trees.

Three Mile (Union): Some crappie and bluegill can be caught from the flooded trees in 8 to 12 feet of water. Walleyes can be caught from the mounds.

Twelve Mile (Union): Mid-sized channel catfish are being caught on all types of baits. Some bluegills can be caught from the deeper flooded trees. Anglers are catching largemouth bass up to 17 inches, with most between 11 and 13 inches.

Badger Creek (Madison): Some channel catfish can be caught from the shallow bays during the late evening. Several small bluegills can be caught from the ends of the jetties or from the flooded tree stumps.

Three Fires (Taylor): Bluegills can be caught from the trees in 6 to 10 feet of water. Some nice channel catfish can be caught on liver or stink baits. Largemouth bass fishing is good near structure. The lake is full and easily usable.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Several bluegills are being caught from the deeper flooded trees on night crawlers. The channel catfish are biting on stink baits or night crawlers in the rocks or close to shore.

West Osceola (Clarke): Largemouth bass fishing is good near shore and around the trees.

Contact: Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.

Big Creek (Polk): Decent size largemouth are being caught along the shore on artificial lures. Bluegills are biting on a small piece of night crawler fished around the shore and structure. Catfishing is fair on night crawlers and chicken liver.

Hickory Grove (Story): Catfishing is good on night crawlers and chicken liver in the evening. Largemouth bass fishing has been good lately with most anglers fishing the shallows with crankbaits. Bluegill fishing is decent in the shallows with a bobber and night crawler.

Saylorville (Polk): White bass fishing is good on crankbaits and spinners that imitate shad. Catfishing is fair on night crawlers.

Saylorville Dam (Polk): Catfishing is decent on chicken liver, night crawlers and live bait in the evening.

Ahquabi (Warren): Lots of small, to-short-to-keep largemouth bass are biting on plastic worms and other artificial lures and bluegills on worms under a bobber. Overall fishing is slow.

Easter Lake (Polk): Catfishing is good using chicken liver or night crawlers. Bluegills are biting all around the lake on worm/bobber combos. Most of the bluegills are small.

Don Williams (Boone): A few crappies are being picked up here and there on jigs and minnows. Bluegills are biting on worms. Catfishing is fair on worms and stink bait. Bass fishing is fair in the mornings and evenings on artificial lures.

Red Rock (Marion): White bass fishing has been good. Try spinners and jigs in shad colors. Catfishing is decent on night crawlers and leeches.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Catfishing is good on just about anything.

Contact: Ben Dodd (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes

Orient (Adair): Channel catfish are fair during the day on prepared baits. Catfish are averaging 20 inches. Bluegills are fair and can be caught on small jigs and tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass fishing is fair using a slow retrieve and plastic worms.

Nodaway (Adair): Bluegill fishing is slow using small jigs tipped with night crawlers. Crappies are slow, but a few are being caught around brush piles with minnows. Channel catfish is fair using liver.

Greenfield (Adair): Bluegill fishing is fair with fish being caught around brush piles or drifting jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass are being caught using plastic baits and spinner baits. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using liver.

Morman Trail (Adair): Bluegills are fair on south and west side of lake. Channel catfish is good using liver around jetties and in the shallow bays in the evening.

Littlefield (Audubon): Crappie fishing is slow, but a few are being caught drifting a jig and minnow. Bluegills are fair casting a small jig tipped with night crawlers. Channel catfish has been fair in shallow bays and corners of the dam using stink bait.

Anita (Cass): Anglers are catching 7 to 8-inch bluegills using jigs from shore and around the jetties. Channel catfish, from 2 to 6 pounds, are being caught on night crawlers and blood bait. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair for fish up to 18 inches. Crankbaits and jigs have been used around brush piles and rock piles.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): A few walleye have been caught drifting night crawlers around sunken trees. Crappie fishing is slow. Channel catfish is fair on outside bend close to shore in the rocks. Dip baits with a red worm are producing 2 to 4 pound fish.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): A few walleyes are being caught on west shore using Lindy rigs and crankbaits. Channel catfish is fair drifting cut bait or shrimp.

Arrowhead (Pottawattamie): Bluegills are fair using jigs with night crawlers. Fish are 7 to 8 inches. Channel catfish are fair using liver and prepared bait close to shore around jetties.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Fishing is slow for crappies and bluegill. Channel catfish is fair fishing shallow bays with liver. A few largemouth bass are being caught using crawdad-colored lures.

Willow (Harrison): Bluegill fishing is slow with a few fish being caught on jigs tipped with night crawlers. Fishing has been good for 12-to 14-inch largemouth bass on plastic worms and crankbaits.

Schaben (Harrison): Bluegills are fair using small jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass are also being caught on night crawlers and plastic baits.

Farm Ponds are good for largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Be sure to ask permission from the landowner first.

Contact: Bryan Hayes (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

SOUTHEAST

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19: The water temperature at Lock and Dam 16 (Muscatine) is 81 degrees and the river pool stage for Pool 16 is 11.30 feet. Water levels are expected to stay steady over the next several days.

With the recent warm weather, warm water temperature and lower summer water levels, fishing has been slow on Pools 16-19. Walleye anglers are picking up a few fish on **Pool 16** near Credit Island, outside Sunset Marina, and near the Interstate 280 Bridge on the Iowa side. Try fishing walleyes around the wing dams and rock piles with jigs tipped with leeches or minnows, and crankbaits. Channel catfishing has slowed but anglers are catching a few catfish on Pools 16-19 on various baits – worms, leeches, crushed minnows, dip baits, shrimp and dead shad. Channel catfish can be found around drift piles, in the backwaters, and the mouths of tributary rivers and streams. Flathead catfishing has been fair to slow in the deeper holes throughout the Mississippi River, in the tail water areas and below the emergency spillways of the navigation dams. Fishing for both channel and flathead catfish has been best in the evening, night, and early morning. Fishing has been fair for largemouth bass and bluegills in accessible backwaters on artificial baits and live bait rigs. Try the backwaters in Credit Island and Sunset Marina in **Pool 16**, Big Timber Area in **Pool 17**, Huron Island **Pool 18**, and Lake Odessa **Pools 17/18** for bluegill and bass.

Lake Darling (Washington): Water temperature dropped to 80 degrees over the weekend. Catfish are biting on chicken liver before 8 a.m. After the sun is up and on the water, the catfish stop biting, except for the little ones.

Lake Geode (Henry): Fishing has been slow with a few anglers catching some nice fish in the early morning. Most of the anglers are leaving the lake well before noon. The catfish have been working the flats and bays in the early hours and look for the bluegills and bass to be in the water willow bays bordering the deepwater drop-offs.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Catfishing in the morning has been good along the rocky shorelines before the sun gets up. Bluegill fishing is fair to good as long as you are there before the sun is. Anglers have been catching bluegills over deepwater in the top two or three feet of water.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Anglers are catching some nice catfish, mostly on shad and stink bait. Wildlife has the inlet and outlet structures open to create a flow through condition to keep the oxygen levels up so don't over look the inlet structure for a place to catch catfish.

Lake Hawthorn (Mahaska): Channel catfish are being caught in the evenings on chicken liver and night crawlers.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Largemouth bass are hitting on a variety of lures. Good numbers have been caught in the 13 to 16-inch range. Bluegills are being caught in 5 feet of water on the edge of the weed line using ice fishing jigs tipped with wax worms. A few crappies are being picked up in 12 feet of water using minnows. Anglers are catching a handful of channel catfish, but the fish they seeing are in the 8 to 15-pound range. A few muskies are starting to be caught on the lake. These fish were stocked just this spring and are only 12 to 14 inches.

Lake Wapello (Davis): A few bluegills are being caught drifting with night crawlers. Anglers are doing quite well using stink bait for bullhead and channel catfish. Largemouth bass have been hitting well on spinners and crankbaits.

Lake Keomah (Mahaska): A few largemouth bass have been caught on a variety of lures early in the morning or late in the evening. A few crappies are being caught in the deeper parts of the lake.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Channel catfish are being caught mainly on chicken liver. Crappies have been hitting on small jigs tipped with wax worms. Largemouth bass are hitting quite well in the mornings on large jigs and crankbaits.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Walleye fishing has been slow, but some have been caught using leeches on worm harnesses. As the water warms up, the walleye should start biting more on crankbaits. Fishing for channel catfish in the evenings has been good using a variety of baits including chicken liver, stink bait, leeches, worms, and cut bait. Catfishermen have been focusing on the flats and the Honey Creek area. A few crappies are being caught in the deepest parts of the lake. White bass are still hitting on minnows and small spinners fished near schools of shad as they break the surface.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Some largemouth and spotted bass can be caught around the shallow cover or deeper structure. Bluegills are also plentiful and are biting on worms around rocks, wood or docks.

Pleasant Creek (Linn): Largemouth bass are being caught around the dam and rock jetties. Plastic worms and live baits (bluegills/crayfish) have been working best. Remember the 18-inch size limit. Suspended bluegills are being picked up on night crawlers. A few nice channel catfish are being caught on night crawlers as well.

Kent Lake (Johnson): Bluegills can be picked up on small worms. Try around structure or suspended off the bottom. Channel catfish are also being picked up on night crawlers and stink bait, with evening being the best time.

Hannen Lake (Benton): Channel catfish are biting here on stink bait. Rocky areas should produce best, especially towards dark. Smaller largemouth bass are consistently being caught on a number of different lures.

Otter Creek (Tama): Anglers looking for lots of action should come here to fish for yellow bass. These scrappy, tasty fish are marginal in size but numbers will make up for it. Channel catfish are also picking up and can be caught on night crawlers and livers.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

NORTHEAST

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Water levels on the Mississippi River are steady to slowly falling. Water levels on earlier this week were 3.9 feet at Guttenberg, 7.2 feet in Dubuque, 3.7 feet in Bellevue and 9.2 feet at Camanche. Water temperature continues to be in the upper 70s to 80 degrees. Clarity is improving after last week's heavy rains. As we head into late July and early August, the lower backwater areas are becoming anoxic (low dissolved oxygen levels) due to heavy vegetation. In order to survive, many of the species such as bluegills, crappie and largemouth bass that are typically found in the backwaters have moved out and into the side channels and main channel with current and higher oxygen levels. When searching for fish, do not stay in one spot more than 15 to 20 minutes without a bite. It usually pays to move around to find the right combination of current and bottom type for the species you are after. Boaters are reminded to stay alert as lower water levels increase the underwater hazards including wing dams, stumps and rocks.

Fishing in general has slowed recently in **Pools 9 to 15**. Low water levels concentrating fish around the wing dams. There are exceptions to this and one of those exceptions is the Harpers Ferry area in **Pool 10**. This area is excellent for crappies using minnows fished near deep woody structure. Bluegills are hitting small pieces of worms fished on the bottom, and largemouth and smallmouth bass are both being caught on crankbaits, spinners or top-water lures fished along the rock.

Fishing is good to excellent for channel catfish in **Pools 9 to 15** as they continue to move onto the rocks to spawn. Fish worms, minnows, cut bait or stink baits by drifting the bait under a bobber through the rocks and rip rapped areas in the main channel and running sloughs. Also try fishing stink baits along the woody debris in the side channels or out on the ends of wing dams.

Bluegill fishing has been good in an array of spots from the backwaters to the main channel in **Pools 9 to 15** using night crawlers fished on the bottom and off of brush piles. Try fishing at the near-shore section of the wing dams or around log piles off the main channel.

Fishing for freshwater drum is consistently good in **Pools 9 to 15** using a simple sliding sinker and a night crawler fished on the bottom. Larger drum (many in the 5 pound range) are being caught using crayfish as bait. The big ones are more for sport; although, some anglers used them for smoking. Night crawlers will yield fish of all sizes, but primarily the smaller edible-size fish. Drum are found mostly in current situations

and you do not need a boat to catch them. Tailwater areas and wing dams are good areas to fish for drum, but remember to move if you do not get a bite within 15 minutes.

Largemouth and smallmouth bass fishing is good to excellent in **Pools 9 to 15** on a variety of lures including small spinners, crankbaits, jigs, top-water lures and soft plastics. Both species are feeding heavily along rocky areas with current. Try backwater sloughs along the snags for hungry largemouth. Many largemouth bass have moved to edges of current situations to feed on minnows. The key to bass fishing is to find habitat and structure. Riprap banks, snags and logs along the shoreline or a combination of these structures is even better. Anglers fishing the rock and woody structure in current areas are catching smallmouth bass using in-line spinners, jigs, stick baits, and crankbaits. Seek out areas with some flow as the water levels are dropping and water temperatures increase.

Northern pike fishing continues to be good to excellent in **Pools 9 to 15** for anglers fishing near the tributaries of the cool water streams that empty into the Mississippi River. Pike will continue to seek these cool water areas as the summertime temperature heats up. Spinners, larger crankbaits or white jigs work well. Northern pike have generally been smaller, ranging in the 25-inch range.

Cedar River (Mitchell, Floyd and Chickasaw): Water levels are low and fishing is excellent for channel catfish using chicken liver and dead chubs. Walleye fishing is fair using twister tails tipped with a crawler worked very slowly. Smallmouth bass are biting on green or purple twister tails and tube jigs.

Cedar, West Fork Cedar and Shell Rock rivers (Butler, Bremer and Black Hawk): Channel catfish are biting well on night crawlers, chicken liver and stink baits. Smallmouth bass fishing is picking up using jigs tipped with a night crawler in the Cedar and Shell Rock rivers. Fishing is starting to pick up for walleyes using jigs tipped with a night crawler. Fish along rocky shorelines or current breaks near logjams.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): Smallmouth bass fishing is good below the Lake Delhi dam in the catch-and-release section of the river. Smallmouth are hitting crankbaits or night crawlers drifted below a bobber. The river is clear and fishing conditions are excellent.

Turkey River (Clayton): The river level is falling and is fishable. Smallmouth bass fishing is excellent using night crawlers, twister tails or shad raps fished on the edge of current breaks. Smallmouth bass fishing is especially hot below Elgin using black twister tails. Rock bass are being caught on small pieces of night crawler fished next to rock boulders and riprap. Walleye fishing is good using a variety of lures fished throughout the day. Channel catfishing is excellent below the dam at Elkader using cut baits and a variety of other catfishing favorites.

Upper Iowa River (Winneshiek and Allamakee): Water levels are low and clear. Walleye fishing has been excellent using crankbaits, white twister tails and jigs tipped with live bait throughout the entire river. Walleyes can be caught right at the lower dam using twister tails. Try using a heavier jig head to get the jig down into the current. A few sauger can be caught from the mouth to the lower dam. Fishing for smallmouth bass is excellent throughout the entire river using twister tails, shad raps, crankbaits and night crawlers on the edge of the current breaks. Quite a few 13 to 14-inch smallies are being caught throughout the day, with some trophy-sized fish mixed in. Channel catfish fishing

is fair using chicken liver or night crawlers on the bottom downstream of the lower dam all the way to the mouth.

Wapsipinicon River (Buchanan): Channel catfish are biting on stink baits, dead cut baits and night crawlers.

Black Hawk County Lakes and Ponds: Fishing is good for largemouth bass using artificial lures next to structure.

Casey Lake (Tama): Bluegill fishing has been very good in the shallow water near shore. When fishing for bluegills, use a piece of worm on a small hook suspended under a bobber. Fishing is good for channel catfish using fresh shrimp, chicken liver or dead cut baits.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Crappie fishing is good in the lower section of the lake. Fish the deeper water by drifting a minnow under a slip bobber in order to locate crappies. Channel catfishing is fair to good using chicken liver, stink baits, cut baits or worms fished on the bottom.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Channel catfishing is fair using chicken liver, stink bait, cut bait or worms fished on the bottom. Catfish that are being caught now are the larger-sized fish. Largemouth bass fishing is fair using plastic worms worked near structure; however, anglers are having better success with top-water lures fished during the evening. Fishing is fair for bluegills on wax worms or a piece of night crawler suspended under a bobber, or with artificial flies. Try using smaller ear when fishing mid-day to hook the finicky ones. A few crappies are being caught with minnows fished under a bobber on the weed lines.

Lake Meyer (Winneshiek): Channel catfish are close to shore next to the larger logs and riprap in the lake. Catfishing is good using chicken liver fished under bobbers over the snags on the south and west sides of the lake. They are also being caught in the evenings on the east side in the shallows using chicken liver on the bottom. Crappies can be caught in the snags using small tube jigs. There are quite a few small ones in the shallows, but the larger fish are out in 8 to 10 feet of water. Bluegill fishing is good on night crawlers or angle worms near the weeds, with sorting of some smaller fish required. Largemouth bass are being caught with surface lures especially in the evening hours. Try using plastic weed-less worms during other hours of the day.

Plainfield Lake (Bremer): Crappies are biting well drifting a minnow under a bobber along the weed beds.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Fishing is picking up for channel catfish using night crawlers or liver on the bottom. Largemouth bass fishing is good in the early morning and late evening. Use slower-moving artificial lures worked along structure. Bluegill fishing is good using wax worms or night crawlers under a bobber. Many bluegills are small.

Trout fishing and stream conditions are excellent. Mornings and evenings usually provide the best success for catching trout. In mid-summer, these times of day are easier on the angler as well! Many trout stream stockings are announced and the dates of proposed stockings can be found on the Iowa DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov or by calling the trout stocking hotline at 563-927-5736.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

NORTHWEST

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): A few walleyes are being caught around the rocks on the east side. Fishing is good for smallmouth bass around shallow rock piles from Big Stoney all the way to Reed's Run throwing grubs.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Fishing is good for bluegills along weed lines in 12 to 18 feet of water using garden worms. The larger fish are coming from the deeper weed lines. Largemouth bass fishing is good around weed lines with leeches or night crawlers. Northern pike fishing is good in Miller's Bay. Fishing is fair trolling for muskies in the evening.

West Fork of the Des Moines River (Emmet): Channel catfish fishing is good using night crawlers for small fish and cut bait for larger fish.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Channel catfish are good on a variety of baits. White bass are fair to good using twisters.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Fishing is good for channel catfish on chicken liver, stink bait and cut bait.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Larger bluegills remain in deeper water. Bass can be found throughout the lake on varying depths. Some nice channel catfish have been caught along the shoreline at the north end of the lake. Try using chicken livers.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Yellow bass are hitting on live bait. Yellows in the 7-8 inch range are being caught along with a few of the larger fish.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Crappie fishing is fair trolling small crappie jigs along the causeway. Sorting is required for larger fish. Largemouth bass are hitting spinner baits, plastic worms and jigs, especially in the early morning and evening hours.

Indian Lake, Eldred Sherwood Park (Hancock): Fishing is fair to good for bluegills using crawlers along the vegetation. Largemouth bass fishing is fair in the mornings and evenings using plastics and spinner baits. Channel catfish are hitting on stink bait and liver, especially in the evening.

Smith Lake (Kossuth): Largemouth bass fishing is good. Spinner baits and jerk baits are working best. Remember Smith Lake has an 18-inch minimum length on bass. Channel catfish angling is good using chicken liver, stink baits and dead chubs.

Lake Cornelia (Wright): Channel catfish angling is excellent using chicken liver, stink bait and dead chubs.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

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